Webb. Claims 34, 36, 37, 39, 40, 42, 43, and 45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Sugishima in view of Webb. Claims 35, 38, 41, and 44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Sugishima in view of Webb as applied to claims 34, 37, 40, and 43, and further in view of Ooki. Claims 18-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kageyama in view of U.S. patent 6,369,905 to Mitsuhashi et al. (herein "Mitsuhashi"). Claims 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 31, and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Sugishima in view of Mitsuhashi. Claims 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Sugishima in view of Mitsuhashi as applied to claims 18 and 26, and further in view of Ooki. Claims 34-45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kageyama in view of Mitsuhashi. Claims 34, 36, 37, 39, 40, 42, 43, and 45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Sugishima in view of Mitsuhashi. Claims 35, 38, 41, and 44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Sugishima in view of Mitsuhashi as applied to claims 34, 37, 40, and 43, and further in view of Ooki. Claims 18-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kageyama in view of U.S. patent 5,726,883 to Levine et al. (herein "Levine"). Claims 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 31, and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Sugishima in view of Levine. Claims 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Sugishima in view of Levine as applied to claims 18 and 26, and further in view of Ooki. Claims 34-45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kageyama in view of Levine. Claims 34, 36, 37, 39, 40, 42, 43, and 45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Sugishima in view of Levine. Claims 35, 38, 41, and 44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Sugishima in view of Levine as applied to claims 34, 37, 40, and 43, and further in view of Ooki.

The outstanding rejection relies upon the teachings in <u>Webb</u>, <u>Mitsuhashi</u>, and <u>Levine</u> to all disclose an operation of storing "a graphic layout of an operation of panel of all of the plurality of image forming apparatuses connected to said computer network." It is respectfully submitted that feature is not taught in any of those cited references.

Further, applicants point out that the effect of the above-noted feature of storing "a graphic layout of an operation of panel of all of the plurality of image forming apparatuses connected to said computer network" is that a new image forming function can be registered newly to the server. More specifically, the server of the claimed invention has a feature of storing information items associated with image forming inherent to all of the plurality of image forming apparatuses. The above-mentioned information items include graphic layouts of operation panels of all of the plurality of image forming apparatuses connected to the network. Also, this server receives requirements for image forming from the client computer. Such requirements from the client computer are part of and covered by the information items stored in the server. As a result, when an image forming apparatus is newly installed under the environment of the network, new image forming functions are registered in the server. Such a feature is neither taught nor suggested by any of the applied art.

In maintaining the rejection based on <u>Webb</u> the outstanding Office Action states:

> Webb discloses a print system that allows a user to access a functional replica of the operation panel of a printer available to a host (column 3, lines 56-60), wherein a Printer Panel software program (51) stored within the program memory of the host (11) generates a replica of a printer control panel (column 7, lines 19-59) (which clearly indicates that the replica of the printer control panel is stored within the host).[1]

The above-noted grounds for rejection is improper in that <u>Webb</u> simply does not disclose or suggest storing a graphical layout of an operation panel of *all* of the image forming apparatuses connected to the network. Instead <u>Webb</u> discloses that a bidirectional

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[1] Office Action of March 27, 2003, page 34, first paragraph.

communication must be established to transmit information of a display of an image forming apparatus.

The outstanding rejection appears to take the position that because Webb can provide a replica of a display panel it inherently must store the graphical layout of that display panel. However, it is noted that the claims require that the graphical layout of operation panels of *all* of the plurality of image forming apparatuses connected to the network are stored, which is clearly not the case in Webb. Instead Webb discloses an operation in which information of an operation panel must be transmitted to an appropriate host to provide the host with a replica of the specific operation panel. A transmission of such information results because in Webb the information of all the information panels connected to the network are *not stored* in a centralized storing device such as a server. That is also clear as Webb specifically states:

> The host 11 is provided with a software utility program which, in cooperation with the controller of printer 16 to be described, facilitates *bidirectional communication* between host 11 and printer 16 *in order to* provide a user of host 11 with access to a replica 35' of operation panel 35.[2]

In such ways, it is believed that the outstanding rejection is incorrect in that Webb does not disclose storing information of *all* of a plurality of image information apparatuses in a central storage device such as a server.

Further, with respect to Mitsuhashi the outstanding rejection cites the disclosure therein at column 5, line 60, to column 6, line 49, to indicate that the host 100 stores a virtual panel image of a printer 1500.[3] That further basis for the outstanding rejection is traversed in that Mitsuhashi does not disclose storing in a centralized storage device, such as a server, a graphical layout of an operation panel of each image forming apparatus connected to the network. In fact, as clear from, for example, the abstract in Mitsuhashi, Mitsuhashi is

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[2] Webb at column 6, lines 56-60 (emphasis added).
[3] Office Action of March 27, 2003, the paragraph bridging pages 13 and 14.

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directed to allowing a virtual display of a physical picture of an image information apparatus to be provided. Mitsuhashi does not disclose or suggest that a graphical layout of an operation panel of each image forming apparatus connected to a network is stored in a central device such as a server.
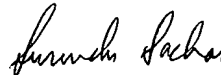
With respect to the teachings in Levine, it is noted that Levine is directed to allowing the storing of customized user interfaces. However, Levine does not disclose or suggest that all image forming apparatuses connected on a network have a graphical layout of an operation panel thereof stored. Instead, as noted above, Levine is directed to allowing the storing customized display panels.

Thus, for such reasons each of the outstanding rejections is traversed.

As no other issues are pending in this application, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully requested that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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